

## ► OUTREACH REPORT

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Outlined below are the main contact methods we have used to include the public in our project. Actual documentation records of public participation, additional minutes and reports, as well as the news releases are included in project Deliverables 3c, 3d & 3e.

### **Coordinating Committee Meetings**

The main purpose for the formation of the Coordinating Committee was to facilitate inter-workgroup coordination to avoid duplicate efforts and collaboration. Meetings were held regularly throughout most of the project, which although not publicized, were open to the public. Minutes of these meetings, with attendance records, were kept and will be included in Deliverable 3c and 3d.

### **Personal interviews with harvesters and general community members**

- a. Barbara Arter's interviews with at least 25 individuals which are documented in her report submitted as Deliverable 5b.
- b. Lauren Alnwick-Pfund's report of in-depth interviews with thirty-three (33) individuals is included in Deliverable 3c.
- c. Shep Erhart's personal interviews with 6 local realtors, the raw data will be included in Deliverable 3d.
- d. Lois Johnson personally interviewed several community members using the questionnaire developed for "Landowner" stakeholder contact and her raw data will also be included in Deliverable 3d.

### **Town Meeting Style Public Meeting: July 27, 2005**

- a. A flyer was developed and distributed and a press release generated and will be submitted in the Outreach Deliverable 3e.
- b. A variety of stakeholders (approximately 23) gathered at a facilitated meeting where the participants discussed "Hopes, Concerns and Ideas" for the future of Taunton Bay. The report of this event was written by Project Assistant Lauren Alnwick-Pfund and is included at the end of this text. The facilitated "raw data" she recorded from that meeting is included in her report.

### **State Agency Meeting: September 1, 2005**

- a. Barb Welch's preparation document was included in Deliverable 3b.
- b. Meeting notes generated by Vanessa Levesque are included in Deliverable 3d.
- c. The attendance list for this meeting was generated and circulated as an electronic contact list and is included in Vanessa's meeting notes.

### **Tour of the University of Maine Center for Cooperative Aquaculture Research and the U.S. Department of Agriculture facility: October 26, 2005**

In an effort to promote education and community understanding as a means of "conflict resolution" and in response to questions from a wide variety of stakeholders, this event was intended to provide an opportunity for the curious to learn more about the local facilities, which are currently raising bloodworms, halibut, cod, salmon, seaweed, and sea urchins indoors. Approximately 18 people attended and, in general, said they would recommend the tour to others. The email invitation and attendance records are included in Deliverables 3d and 3e.

## **REPORT OF THE TOWN MEETING JULY 27, 2005 (excerpt)**

Lauren Alnwick-Pfund, Project Assistant

### **The Meeting**

The event facilitator, Ron Beard, gave the welcome and introduction. Following the outline for the session and a brief description of the Taunton Bay management pilot project, he provided some ground rules to help foster an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. These included basic guidelines for discussion such as: listen to understand, ask questions, share the “air time” (one person speaks at a time), focus on interests, not positions, and disagree openly and respectfully. Stakeholders were informed that their input and comments would be compiled and forwarded to the State.

The facilitator then reiterated the suggestion that was broached during the session outline encouraging the group to divide itself into smaller focus groups, which quickly and smoothly became the Fisheries and the Landowners. The group split up quite easily along the lines of fisheries and landowners, but did not necessarily end up unifying (i.e. actually talking to each other across stakeholder/cultural boundaries). That communication was lacking at the meeting reflects trends in the general community. This project faces an important challenge: the task of opening up channels of communication between folks whose paths generally don't cross, all with the aim of increasing mutual understanding (if not acceptance) of one another.

The smaller group sessions were the most intensive and therefore were planned to be the longest segment of the meeting, taking up at least 45 minutes to an hour. To begin, facilitators prompted participants to speak to the three topics outlined above and recorded what was said in large print on flip charts. After brainstorming, the group reviewed the material they generated and starred the important ideas they wanted to share in the larger forum. Following that was a refreshment break with a dual role of taking a break and giving facilitators time to write the key items identified by the group onto 8 ½ by 11 sheets and place them on a large blank sheet at the front of the room.

After the break, the attendees regrouped and the event facilitator invited the focus group facilitators (or any other participant) to report their key findings. Next was a discussion of the findings, guided by the following questions:

- What hopes and concerns are shared across all groups?
- Where are there areas of potential or actual disagreement?
- Are there some shared beliefs or principles that should guide this project as it goes forward?

### **Raw Meeting Data**

The following is a verbatim transcript of the data that was gleaned from Town Meeting participants and recorded onto flip-charts by facilitators. Following the transcript is a list of the common ground hopes, concerns and ideas shared across the groups.

### **Fisheries Focus Group**

#### *Hopes*

- There will be a fishing industry for the children, so they can continue their family's lifestyle
- The bay will be opened up for mussel dragging once again, as it was in the past.
- Mussels won't be wasted. (Mussels are growing fast and losing economic value. They are too large and also have pearls. Too large + pearls = no good for market)

### TTBS • OUTREACH REPORT—3

- There will be a long, sustainable harvest for generations to come
- Seaweed harvesters are afforded the same rights as other fisheries
- There would be better access to the bay
- There would be a \*good\* management plan
- Resources (*and therefore people?*) prosper
- Water quality should be a priority of any management plan for Taunton Bay
- Nonfishing people understand the fishing industry better

#### *Concerns*

- Unfairness, a major theme—in the current and any proposed regulatory frameworks; for example, if a large corporation were to come in the bay and take seed mussels; also, that perhaps not everyone is being fairly represented in the process of developing a bay management strategy (skepticism and wariness on the part of marine-resource harvesters towards “porch seat managers” who know even less about fisheries than does the State and who imagine they could manage the resources in the bay that fishermen depend on to make a living)
- That individual leases would be given in separate areas of Taunton Bay (don’t do it)
- That mussel dragging would ever be unrestricted (don’t allow unrestricted mussel dragging)
- UMCCAR
  - Effluent discharged into the bay with chlorine, other chemicals (?)
  - Impact on eelgrass?
  - Questions of scale, more and more fish grown leading to more development, more pollution?
  - Funding is pouring in, how much power will they have?
- Fisheries decision-makers do not appear to put enough consideration towards the economic impacts their decisions have on real people doing real things. That is, decisions made “from above” cause hardworking local people (who perhaps have a long family history of and pride in their traditional lifestyle) to lose their livelihood, resulting in personal bankruptcy and the collapse of small companies, in short, social disintegration
- Loss of livelihood
- Loss of tradition
- Little working access to the water
- Confidentiality of economic information provided
- If we take care of the bay, benefits might not be local (design mechanisms to promote local economies, reward reinvestment and efforts)
- Management decisions for Taunton Bay might be made by locals who know little about the bay’s resources
- Quality, ecosystem health, (trash, faulty septic systems, clear cutting, erosion, recreation, etc.)
- Bay management model may not include fishermen (*Really?*)
- People aren’t being represented
- Draggers are concerned about the loss of harvestable area statewide, and not being able to survive, driven into areas because of lobstering pressures

#### *Ideas*

- Joint lease site for experimental mussel seed
- If seaweed-harvesting conflicts can’t be solved at the state level (preferable), try resolve at the local bay level

- State needs to resolve seaweed-harvesting issues, don't try to work it out at the local bay level
- Experimental harvesting of mussels by hand or by dragging
- Make eelgrass zones no dragging zones
- Put in access point at old L.A. Gray
- Seed harvesting permit decisions go through a committee (not just the Commissioner)
- Track the economic worth of harvesting in Taunton Bay (including seed harvesting)
- Confidentiality of economic information would have to be provided
- Use proceeds of fisheries in the bay to fund research in the bay
- Manage so locals receive benefits, the benefits of taking care of the bay are open to taking by fishermen from other areas (relates to rewarding effort, the idea of local resource users managing their own resources, staying within your own resources, not going to some other place, encourages responsibility and sustainability)
- Develop a clear process for TTBS, for making management decisions *within the organization*, (as well as for the study goal of making management recommendations)
- Develop a conflict resolution process to deal with these issues in Taunton Bay
- Rebuild trust within the project
- Use a different type of outreach to fishermen

### **Landowners Focus Group**

#### *Hopes*

- Healthy water quality
- Abundant wildlife
- Sustainable jobs
- Inclusive local voice in bay management
- As natural as possible
- With respect for marine harvesters
- \*Balance
- Limits on development
- Keep the bay scenic
- Education for property owners on shoreland management (e.g. erosion)
- Conserve the bay
- Understand the bay

#### *Concerns*

- Industrial development/scale of development for a small bay
- Erosion
- Can we ever know enough to adequately protect/manage the bay?
- Pesticides/herbicides on blueberries
- Motorized traffic (jet ski doos)
- Noise pollution
- Overharvesting of marine species
- Too much aquaculture
- Development that pollutes (e.g. septic, fertilizer)
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Damage to ecosystem
- Water access (few access points and too many users)
- Regulatory decisions made without sufficient information (ecological, social, economic)

- Inappropriate development
- Lack of coordination between towns
- Inadequate monitoring of shoreland zoning

#### *Ideas*

- More monitoring (therefore more money)
- Agree on a vision for the future
- Agree on management principles
- Teach landowners to be good stewards and make it easy
- Educate all bay users on how to take care of the bay
- Coordination among towns
- Property owners and fisheries folks learn to talk to each other AND work together
- Manage the bay as an ecosystem

#### **Common Ground**

What hopes, ideas and concerns are shared across all groups?

- Property owners and fishery folks learn to communicate and work together
- Education on all fronts (everyone's a teacher)
- Make it easy for people to be good stewards, reward efforts
- Questions about aquaculture operations on Taunton Bay
- More monitoring as a source of jobs as well as information
- Good management plan
- Sustainability, both ecological and economic

Roger Fleming, a member of the Taunton Bay Study Governance Working Group from the Conservation Law Foundation, summed up the areas of agreement reached at the meeting very well.

For example (and I don't mean to be inclusive), everyone wants the bay to be managed for both ecological sustainability and economic sustainability, everyone saw the need for education of both landowners and resource users about how to take care of the bay and be good stewards, and everyone wants a more inclusive management process and for everyone to understand each other's views better. From the perspective of someone who does not live or work directly on the bay, I was very impressed by the amount of common ground I saw in the concerns and hopes for the bay, and the level of recognition for others' needs and viewpoints.

#### **DMR Listening Session: Harvesting and Fisheries Management in Taunton Bay**

January 19, 2006, 7:00 pm Franklin Community Center

Submitted by Barbara S. Arter, BSA Environmental Consulting

On January 19, 2006, a Listening Session was held at the Franklin Community Center to discuss harvesting and fisheries issues in Taunton Bay. The meeting, which was held in conjunction with the Taunton Bay Study, had two major objectives: 1) to begin a dialogue between harvesters and the Friends of Taunton Bay (FTB) for the purpose of providing input into the Taunton Bay Study and 2) to gather input and information for the development of MDMR's forthcoming Taunton

Bay Comprehensive Resource Management Plan. John Sowles, MDMR, was present to hear from harvesters on a variety of issues for the plan. Barbara S. Arter, BSA Environmental Consulting, facilitated the meeting and Vanessa Levesque, MSPO, was present to answer questions about the Bay Management Study and to assist with facilitation and notekeeping.

### Attendance

There were 28 individuals representing 6 towns in attendance at the meeting. Of the 28 participants, 20 were harvesters and 8 were nonharvesters (riparian landowners, selectmen, recreational users). Table 1 lists the number of harvesters by town of residence. The majority of harvesters in attendance (70%) reside in the towns of Sullivan (35%) and Hancock (35%). Of the 8 nonharvesters in attendance, 7 were from Franklin and 1 was from Sullivan.

Table 1. Number of Harvesters by Town of Residence.

Town of Residence	Number of Harvesters
Sullivan	7
Hancock	7
Franklin	3
Cherryfield	1
Milbridge	1
Eastbrook	1

On the attendance sheet, participants were asked to identify their fishery. Of the 20 harvesters present, 12 indicated that they harvested only 1 species, 7 harvested 2 species, and 1 indicated that he harvested all species. Table 2 lists the number of participants in each fishery represented at the meeting. The two fisheries with the highest number of representatives were lobster (31%) and clam (19%).

Table 2. Number of Harvesters per Fishery.

Fishery	Number of Harvesters
Lobster	8
Clam	5
Mussel	3
Scallop	2
Elver	2
Worm	2
Smelt	1
Seaweed	1
Alewife	1
All	1

### Pre-Meeting Discussions

Since many harvesters arrived 30-40 minutes ahead of meeting time, the consultant had an opportunity to introduce herself and discuss the purpose of the meeting with the harvesters one-on-one. All of the harvesters were eager to share their fishery concerns and all of them had a very positive attitude. When asked how they found out about the meeting and why they came, several answered that they had heard

about the meeting via word-of-mouth and that they came because they heard that someone was “shutting the fishery down” and they were greatly concerned.

### **Meeting: Part I**

After introductions were made, Vanessa briefed the group on the state’s Bay Management Study and Barbara discussed the Taunton Bay Study and the Economic Assessment Report. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to the MDMR Taunton Bay Comprehensive Resource Management Plan.

The following is a list of issues raised in Part I of the meeting:

1. A participant asserted that the “Colonial Ordinance” suggests that the local fishery belongs to the town. Who owns a local fishery? The town or state? It was agreed that this needed investigation.
2. John Sowles discussed how the moratorium legislation requires that the moratorium extend to 2008 and that MDMR must propose a Comprehensive Resource Management Plan for Taunton Bay by 2007.
3. There is concern that Friends of Taunton Bay and MDMR are advocating to shut down the fishery in Taunton Bay.
4. TB Pilot Study will generate many maps and data. The question is what will data/maps show? And how will the information be used.
5. For the Resource Plan, MDMR is seeking local knowledge: What used to be harvested, where, the quality, quantity, etc. How does it compare with today?
6. The town of Sullivan has a shellfish ordinance and as such, they control the distribution of their shellfish licenses. However, Franklin and Hancock do not have such an ordinance and as a result, harvesters from other towns can harvest in their flats. It was generally agreed that the three towns should develop a 3-town ordinance for the bay that is locally controlled and not influenced at the state level. Towns should also consider becoming part of a larger Frenchmen Bay Ordinance.
7. Clamflats could be managed and the towns could work together to rotate flat harvesting and possibly establish a clam flat seeding program.
8. Although clams can and should be managed, most agreed that worms should be “left alone” and allowed to go through their natural cycle.
9. Any management plan created for the bay should be overseen by the towns and not by conservation organizations.
10. Is there a problem with the fisheries in Taunton Bay? Is there a need to manage, other than what is currently done? Why manage? Some concerns that could be addressed in a management plan are:
  - a. Many feel that worms are undersized but some argue that that is the natural cycle. Are harvesters OK with waiting out the cycle?
  - b. Some harvesters feel that the West shore had more worms. Why?
  - c. Concerns about septic pollution
11. Most agreed that cooperation is needed for any form of management at both local and state level.

### **Meeting: Part Two**

The second part of the meeting was dedicated to working with harvesters individually and in small groups to obtain individual feedback about where they harvest and trends relating to quality and quantity. Harvesters were encouraged to draw on large maps to indicate their fishery.

Although the mood of the first part of the meeting was slightly antagonistic, the mood in the second part of the meeting was very conciliatory. Harvesters were very willing and proud to share information about their livelihood. The atmosphere was genuine and convivial. Upon leaving, most harvesters said they were glad the meeting was held and they were looking forward to the “next one.”

### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

1. It is apparent from both previous interviews and the atmosphere of this meeting, that most harvesters do not feel antagonistic about sharing information if they are approached one-on-one or in small

group. In fact, all of the harvesters who had been interviewed previous to the meeting (phone interview for the Economic Report) had a positive attitude toward this meeting. Antagonism appears to surface primarily only in the group setting. Therefore, it is recommended that the best way to communicate or establish a relationship with harvesters is individually or in small group.

2. Since most harvesters left the meeting with a positive attitude and desire for more meetings, more interaction in the form of interviews, listening sessions, pot luck supers, etc, is recommended.
3. Most harvesters and local community members have an extremely negative attitude regarding the motives of Friends of Taunton Bay (FTB). Most of these individuals believe that FTB would like to close the bay to all harvesting activities and that FTB has an adversarial agenda and inappropriately strong influence at the state level. Therefore, in order for FTB to be an effective leader in bay management and to gain respect in the community, they should develop a campaign that creates a better image for the group. Some examples of steps that the organization could take to enhance their standing in the community include:
  - a. The Executive Committee should review its policy and FTB's stand on the dragging moratorium. It is unclear if the organization, or just a few individuals, supports the moratorium. This policy should be made clear to the public.
  - b. Enhance newspaper coverage that clearly states FTB mission and agenda.
    - Advertise ALL meetings in the newspaper and invite the public to attend.
    - Host presentations that are inclusive to harvesters (e.g., "Alewife Harvesting in Taunton Bay")
4. If the state decides to adopt Bay Management principles statewide, then state agencies should initiative, encourage, and support the creation of multi-stakeholder bay coalitions. These coalitions would be comprised of state, federal, and municipal government representatives, conservation organizations, harvesters, industry, and residential landowners. They would act as a vehicle to solve problems, provide input to regulating agencies, and provide information transfer and outreach. □